

## Message Text

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15

ACTION EA-14

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SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSC-10

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0128

AMEMBASSY USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT PFOR VS VN

SUBJECT: SAIGON MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE UPCOMING KISSINGER THO  
MEETING

PARIS FOR AMBASSAODR MARTIN

1. THE SAIGON PRESS AND RADIO HAVE GIVEN WIDE COVERAGE TO THE  
ANNOUNCEMENT THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER AND LE DUC THO WILL MEET  
AGAIN IN PARIS ON DEC 20. SIGNIFICANT EDITORIAL OPINION AND RADIO  
COMMENTARY ARE REPORTED BELOW.

2. EDITORIAL COMMENT:

SEVERAL PAPERS CARRIED EDITORIALS DECEMBER 16 ON THE  
FORTHCOMING MEETING. THE BASIC TONE WAS ONE OF HOPE THAT PROGRESS  
TOWARD PEACE MIGHT BE ACHIEVED, BUT THERE IS ALSO A STRONG  
CURRENT OF SKEPTICISM. THE ORGAN OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S POL-  
ITICAL PARTY, DAN CHU DECLARED THAT THE NEWS OF THE KISSINGER-THO

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ENCOUNTER "HAS NOT STIRRED UP THE PUBLIC AS MUCH AS DURING THE  
TIME OF THEIR PREVIOUS MEETING IN EARLY JUNE." THE PAPER BELIEVED  
MANY OBSERVERS "DOUBT THAT THE MEETING THIS TIME WILL YIELD GOOD  
RESULTS," AND IT NOTED THAT THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE "HAVE

RECEIVED ONLY TOO MANY COMMUNIST PLEDGES IN BLACK INK ON WHITE PAPER."

3. A MORE OPTIMISTIC VIEW WAS TAKEN BY OPPOSITIONIST DIEN TIN WHICH COMMENTED DEC 16 THAT LAST JANUARY'S PARIS AGREEMENT PROVIDES A BASIS FOR PEACE, AND THAT THE UPCOMING KISSINGER -THO NEGOTIATIONS ARE "AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THEM TO REVIEW THE BREACHES IN THAT DOCUMENT AND TO TAKE TIGHTER MEASURES TO LEAD THE TWO SOUTH VIETNAMESE SIDES TOWARD CORRECT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE AGREEMENT." EVEN DIEN TIN HOWEVER WAS SKEPTICAL AS SHOWN BY A SEPARATE EDITORIAL UNDER THE BYLINE OF EX SENATOR HONG SON DONG ITS PUBLISHER. DONG HOPED THAT MORE WOULD COME FROM THIS MEETING THAN JUST ANOTHER DOCUMENT. "THERE HAVE BEEN TOO MANY DOCUMENTS AND TOO MANY PLEDGES ALREADY," DONG REMARKED.

4. A DECEMBER 16 EDITORIAL IN THE INDEPENDENT DAILY DOC LAP THOUGHT THAT SECRET NEGOTIATIONS HAVE BEEN UNDERWAY BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND NORTH VIETNAM NOT ONLY TO ARRANGE THE DEC 20 MEETING BUT ALSO TO BARGAIN ON SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES. "THESE ADVANCE NEGOTIATIONS WILL PERMIT THE FORTHCOMING MEETING BETWEEN THE TWO NEGOTIATORS TO BE SHORTENED," THE PAPER SPECULATED. AT THE SAME TIME HOWEVER DOC LAP FEARED THAT NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY A "FIERCE" MILITARY SITUATION IN THE DAYS AHEAD AS THE COMMUNISTS AND EVEN POSSIBLY THE GVN\* TRY TO IMPROVE THEIR BARGAINING POSITION. HOWEVER, THE PAPER DID NOT THINK THERE WOULD BE A GENERAL OFFENSIVE BEFORE THE KISSINGER-THO MEETING.

5. FURTHER EDITORIAL COMMENTS ON DECEMBER 18 FOLLOWED THE SAME PATTERN AS ABOVE. OPPOSITION DAI DAN TOC FEARED THAT THE DECEMBER 20 MEETING WOULD NOT RESULT IN ANYTHING NEW BUT IT WAS WILLING TO "WAIT FOR AN EXHIBITION OF SECRETARY KISSINGER'S GENIUS."

INDEPENDENT TIA SANG EMPHASIZED WHAT IT SAW AS THE "RESPONSIBILITY" OF THE UNITED STATES AND NORTH VIETNAM TO SOLVE THE CURRENT DEADLOCK. THE PAPER WAS HOPEFUL THAT THE TWO PARTIES HAD IN EFFECT, ACKNOWLEDGED THIS RESPONSIBILITY IN AGREEING TO MEET.  
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6. EDITORIALS ON DEC 19 TOOK SLIGHTLY DIVERGENT APPROACHES. INDEPENDENT SONG THAN BELIEVED THAT KISSINGER WOULD DIRECTLY "INFORM LE DUC THO THAT THE UNITED STATES IS DETERMINED TO SOLVE ONCE AND FOR ALL THE VIETNAM WAR." INDEPENDENT BUT THEP THOUGHT THAT THE MOST URGENT PROBLEM FOR THE TWO NEGOTIATORS TO SETTLE WAS THE MILITARY SITUATION, ESPECIALLY THE INFILTRATION OF NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS INTO THE SOUTH AND INTO CAMBODIA.

7. SAIGON RADIO COMMENTARY  
AN EXTENSIVE ANALYSIS OF THE COMING TALKS BETWEEN DR KISSINGER AND LE DUC THO AND THE POSSIBILITY OF A NEW GENERAL OFFENSIVE WAS CARRIED OVER SAIGON RADIO AT 1300 DEC 18 (SEE FBIS S18100T DEC

FOR FULL TEXT). THE ANALYST CONCLUDES THAT THERE IS "AN EXTREMELY GREAT GAP BETWEEN THEORY AND REALITY" IN RECENT US OFFICIAL STATEMENTS ON THE PROSPECT FOR PEACE IN SVN. THE COMMENTATOR ALSO CONCLUDES THAT IT IS "REALLY NAIVE TO SEEK A MEETING IN PARIS TO DEMAND THAT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTS STAY OUTSIDE THE CONFLICT AND PLEDGE TO END THEIR INFILTRATION INTO SVN, SO THAT THE TWO SOUTHWIETNAMESE SIDES CAN THEMSELVES SOLVE THEIR INTERNAL PROBLEMS. SUCH NAIVETE WILL OBVIOUSLY BE UNABLE TO YIELD ANY PROSPECT FOR A REAL PEACE IN SVN BECAUSE NAIVETE WILL ENCOURAGE THE INVADERS TO ADVANCE."

8. THE BROADCASTER ACKNOWLEDGES APPROVINGLY THE "IMMEDIATE AND VEHEMENT" REACTIONS IN BOTH SIAGON AND WASHINGTON TO THE DEC 15 COMMUNIST AMBUSH OF A JCRC TEAM IN SVN. HE NOTES THE RECENT INTENSIFIED ENEMY CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS, CITING BATTLES IN TAY NINH, DINH TUONG, QUANG DUC, ETC. HOWEVER, "DESPITE THOSE INTENSIFIED COMMUNIST ACTIVITIES," THE COMMENTATOR NOTES, "SOME US POLITICAL AND MILITARY FIGURES HAVE INTENTIONALLY OR UNINTENTIONALLY RULED OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A COMMUNIST RESUMPTION OF THE WAR." RECENT STATEMENTS BY SAIGON VISITORS NUCHESTERLEIN AND KRAEMER ARE MENTIONED, AS WELL AS OBSERVATIONS BY "PENTAGON MILITARY ANALYSTS." THESE VIEWPOINTS THE BROADCAST SAYS ARE "FROM THE THEORETICAL VIEWPOINT... SIMILAR" TO THOSE EXPRESSED BY SECRETARY KISSINGER "WHO RECENTLY DESCRIBED THE CONFLICT BETWEEN THE RVN AND THE COMMUNISTS AS AN INTERNAL ASPECT OF THE VN WAR."

9. THE NEWS ANALYST ACKNOWLEDGES THAT THE STATEMENT BY  
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SECRETARY KISSINGER ON DEC 6 DID CHARGE THAT CONTINUED NVN INFILTRATION IS A VIOLATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT AND HENCE "NOT ONLY AN INTERNAL BUT ALSO AN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT." THE SECRETARY SOUGHT THUS TO RELAY A WARNING TO THE NORTH VIETNAMESE TO LEAVE THE RVN AND THE NLF ALONE TO SETTLE THEIR ACCOUNTS. HOWEVER, THIS "THEORETICAL" APPROACH CANNOT BE SO SIMPLY TRANSLATED INTO REALITY, THE COMMENTATOR CONCLUDES, "PARTICULARLY WHEN THIS REALITY IS THE NVN AMBITION OF INVADING THE RVN." REALITY DEMONSTRATES, THE ANALYST CONTINUES THAT THE THIRDED WAR IN VN HAS REALLY BEGUN. HENCE THE "NAIVETE" OF ANY ATTEMPT TO PURSUADE THE NVN COMMUNISTS TO STAY OUTSIDE THE CONFLICT.  
BENNETT

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